THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE):(a) to (d) A contract was signed with M/s Rosoboronexport, Russia on 14.7.2006 for the acquisition of three stealth frigates. The cost of each ship is USD 332 million (equivalent to Rs. 1482.38 crore @ 1 USD=Rs. 44.65). These ships are scheduled to be delivered in 2011-2012.

The ships would be fully equipped according to navy's staff requirements. They are different from INS Prahar which was smaller than these ships and of a different type. The decision to induct the three ships was based on the experience of navy gained in terms of reliability and dependability of the three stealth frigates already inducted.

Ban on mobile phones in offices

†890. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have banned carrying of mobile-cum-camera phones in offices including I.B. considered sensitive from security view point; and

(b) if so, the number of offices identified for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE):(a) and (b) In the Ministry of Defence, according to the existing instructions of the various services and departments, carrying of Mobile Phones with camera is not permitted in the office premises of the Defence Headquarters Security (DHQ) zone, Units/formation Headquarters/Establishment of the Army; Technical Area/Headquarters of the Air Force; Defence High Security zones of the Navy and the Laboratories and Establishments of the Defence Research & Development Organization (DRDO).

Purchase of Warships from Russia

891. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to purchase three more 4000 tonnes warships from Russia;

(b) if so, the details regarding the configuration and advantages of these warships; and

(c) the details regarding the technical advantages of these warships, which would imporve our Naval power and how much this deal will cost?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.